UNITED NATIONS

Daily Highlights

Department of Public Information • Central News Section • New York
Prepared by Central News

DH/2013
31 October 1995

WEDNESDAY HIGHLIGHTS

* Financial crisis is affecting United Nations operational activities for development, Secretary-General tells Pledging Conference for Development Activities.

* United States cannot unilaterally reduce its contributions to peace-keeping operations, New Zealand tells Administrative and Budgetary Committee.

* Indefinite extension of NPT represents collective commitment to exclusively peaceful use of nuclear energy and renunciation of nuclear weapons, IAEA Director General says.

* Presidents of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia and Croatia begin peace talks in Dayton, Ohio.

* United Nations begins withdrawing 6,000 peace-keepers from Bosnia and Herzegovina, as recommended by Force Commander.

* Yasushi Akashi to assume post of Special Adviser to Secretary-General on 10 November.

* Aggression should be within jurisdiction of proposed international criminal court, Greece tells Legal Committee.

* * *

The financial crisis facing the United Nations is affecting operational activities for development, as well as regular budget, peace-keeping and humanitarian operations, Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali said today. He told the United Nations Pledging Conference for Development Activities that development needs were growing in range and in complexity. At the same time, levels of development aid channeled through the United Nations system were declining.

The operational activities of the United Nations system for development were a vital component of multilateral development cooperation, the Secretary-General stressed. If sufficient resources were not made available to United Nations funds and programmes, their efficiency and effectiveness would be impaired and the larger profile of the system would be affected.

(more)

For information media—not an official record

The importance of voluntary contributions went beyond the viability of operations in the field, he continued. It touched the very heart of United Nations development cooperation in its broadest dimensions. At a time when there was a growing perception that the Organization's profile in development should be highlighted, contributions to its funds and programmes assumed special importance.

"We face mounting challenges in development," the Secretary-General concluded. "Political will needs to be sustained. Development fatigue must be resisted. I ask you to look beyond narrow, short-term, domestic interest. Let us together look to the future, to peace and security in their broadest sense.

* * *

The treaty obligations assumed by the United States on joining the United Nations are legally binding under international law, the representative of New Zealand told the Fifth Committee (Administrative and Budgetary) yesterday. She said those obligations could not be nullified by the decision of a single Member State or its national legislature. She was responding to a statement by the United States on 18 October that it would pay no more than 25 per cent of the assessments for any peace-keeping operations.

If the United States chose not to meet its treaty obligations, its growing arrears must eventually be treated according to Article 19 of the Charter, the New Zealand representative went on to say. According to that Article, a Member State would lose its voting rights in the General Assembly if its arrears equalled or exceeded its contributions for the preceding two full years. The representative of China said New Zealand's statement reflected the views of all Members, except the United States.

Also yesterday, the African Group of States said the resources allocated to the section of the proposed 1996-1997 United Nations budget on Africa's critical economic situation, recovery and development should be increased. Speaking through Uganda, the African States said the Secretariat should allocate resources commensurate with the activities planned for continent.

An inflation-adjusted $43 million is proposed for the Department for Policy Coordination and $4 million for Africa's critical situation. For the development support and management services department, $28.5 million is proposed. While the budget proposes spending of $48.4 million for the information and policy analysis department, the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ) recommends $48.2 million.

* * *

The indefinite extension of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) and the strengthening of the review process should be read as a collective

commitment to the exclusively peaceful use of nuclear energy and the renunciation of nuclear weapons, according to the Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), Hans Blix. He told the General Assembly today that the results of the NPT Review and Extension Conference also represented a commitment by non-nuclear-weapon States not to acquire such weapons and a commitment by weapon States to nuclear disarmament.

A comprehensive test-ban was already in force for the more than 170 non-nuclear-weapon States which had accepted comprehensive IAEA safeguards for all their nuclear activities, Mr. Blix continued. Those States were obliged not to use any nuclear material for explosions and the Agency verified that that obligation was respected. Entrusting the IAEA with responsibility for verifying a test-ban treaty would save resources by avoiding duplication and overlap and would permit rapid implementation.

* * *

President Alija Izetbegovic of Bosnia and Herzegovina, President Slobodan Milosevic of Serbia, and President Franjo Tudjman of Croatia today began talks to end the Bosnian conflict in Dayton, Ohio. The question of Eastern Slavonia -- the last Serb-held area of Croatia -- was also to be addressed. United States mediator Richard Holbrooke recently warned that if the talks failed, Bosnia and Herzegovina would slip back into war.

* * *

The United Nations has begun withdrawing about 6,000 peace-keepers from Bosnia and Herzegovina, as recommended earlier this year by the Force Commander of the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR), Lieutenant-General Rupert Smith. The Force currently has a strength of just under 27,000 peace-keepers. That figure will be reduced to some 21,500 by mid-January, according to a United Nations spokesman.

* * *

The outgoing Special Representative for the former Yugoslavia, Yasushi Akashi, will assume his new post of Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on 10 November, a United Nations spokesman said today. He is being replaced by Under-Secretary-General Kofi Annan, who will serve as the Secretary-General's Special Envoy to the former Yugoslavia and also to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO).

* * *

Aggression constitutes the epicentre of international criminality, the representative of Greece told the Sixth Committee (Legal) yesterday as it continued its consideration of a proposed international criminal court. Fifty years after Nuremberg and the recognition of aggression as a violation of

international law under the United Nations Charter, the court could not ignore that crime, she said. If the court were barred from exercising jurisdiction over aggression until the Security Council decided on the matter, it would be paralysed into inaction.

The representative of Germany said that if aggression were included in the court's jurisdiction, the Security Council would play an essential role. The Council should have the power to refer situations to the court. The representatives of Sweden and Lesotho urged that the court adjudicate only the most serious international crimes. They favoured the inclusion in the statute of a review mechanism whereby additional crimes could be added to the court's jurisdiction at a later date.

* *** *